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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7521  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7856  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3589  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6668  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1840  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1423  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8337  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8487  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 001572

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [IN](#)  
SUBJECT: CONGRESS WALKS A FINE LINE IN UTTAR PRADESH  
BROUHAHA

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1072  
[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 559

[1](#)1. (SBU) Three weeks before Uttar Pradesh,s (U.P.) state assembly by-elections, the Congress Party,s state unit chief Rita Bahuguna Joshi kicked up a political dust storm with an incendiary comment about U.P. Chief Minister Kumari Mayawati. The party now finds itself having to weather this storm as it seeks to expand its support base in U.P. and maintain the strength of its coalition government in Delhi. While Congress President Sonia Gandhi has distanced herself from the controversy, her son and Member of Parliament Rahul Gandhi has donned a more public role and successfully shifted the focus to Mayawati,s poor record on governance and development in India,s largest state. Shifting political alliances in Uttar Pradesh have national consequences, but no one is seriously talking yet about leaving the governing United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition. END SUMMARY.

Joshi,s Incendiary Remarks...

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[1](#)2. (U) In a July 15 speech in Moradabad, U.P. Congress Party chief Rita Bahuguna Joshi criticized the state,s District General of Police for using helicopters to distribute 25,000 to 75,000 Rupees (\$550 to \$1700 USD) payments to Dalit rape victims. These payments are in accordance with the 1989 Prevention of Atrocities Act, which provides government financial assistance to Dalit rape victims for court costs and daily expenses. (NOTE: Joshi is the daughter of the late Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna, a Brahmin. She has been in and out of the Congress Party, having contested past elections as an independent and Samajwadi Party (SP) candidate. END NOTE.) Emphasizing the discrepancy between wasteful government spending and good governance in U.P., Rita Bahuguna Joshi emotionally told her supporters , &I say you should throw this money at Mayawati,s face and tell her that if she is raped, I will pay her Rs 1-crore (\$23,000 USD) compensation.8

... and incendiary results

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[1](#)3. (U) Within hours of making this statement, alleged members of Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) torched Joshi,s home

and four vehicles. Media reports indicate that local police entered her residence and left with her servants prior to the arson attack, allowing a mob to storm the house. (Note: One servant who had hid in a room in the house survived the attack. End Note.). The police allegedly took no further action for two hours, although, according to the media, police officers were watching the fire from 500 meters away at Chief Minister Mayawati,s home.

¶4. (U) Authorities charged Joshi on July 16 with &promoting enmity between groups<sup>8</sup> and "insulting a woman,s modesty,<sup>8</sup> and held her in jail without bail in Moradabad. The police released her on a personal bond of Rs 30,000 (\$625 USD) on July 18 and her case was scheduled for a July 29 hearing. Chief Minister Mayawati, who led efforts against the Bharatiya Janata Party,s (BJP) Philbit MP, Varun Gandhi, for his fiery communal rhetoric during India,s elections (Ref. B), compared Joshi,s remarks to his in the press and vowed to pursue justice against her. (NOTE: The opposition, Bharatiya Janata Party, haw^s.CQ